

# Prekindergarten Expansion Grant

Absolute Priority I

(Corrected version)

Application  
SFY 2015

Please return completed application  
to MSDE by  
**Wednesday, June 11, 2014**  
**4:00 p.m.**

Maryland State Department of Education  
Division of Early Childhood Development  
200 West Baltimore St., 10th floor,  
Baltimore, MD 21201

**Document available  
in alternative format.**

**PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION:**

Type of Application: Absolute Priority I (Invitational Priority I & II)

**Name of Grant Program:**

Prekindergarten Expansion Grant

**Authorization:**

The Prekindergarten Expansion Act of 2014 (SB 332)

**Dissemination:**

Tuesday, April 22, 2014

**Deadline:**

Wednesday, June 11, 2014

**PURPOSE:**

1. Expand free access to half-day and full-day public prekindergarten for four-year olds from families with household incomes at or below 300 percent of Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) for the school year. The household income of 300 percent of FPG defines the eligibility of access to prekindergarten.

Grant funds will provide:

Half-day or full-day prekindergarten programs for 20 eligible four-year olds at licensed and state or nationally accredited programs, published at Level 5 of Maryland EXCELS, or a certificate of approval from MSDE in collaboration with a local board of education under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

*Invitational priority I -*

Half-day or full-day prekindergarten for 20 eligible four-year olds enrolled at a network of registered and nationally accredited family child care providers or programs with a certificate of approval by MSDE. Networks must be established by a nonprofit organization and in collaboration with a local board of education under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

*Invitational priority II:*

Half-day or full day prekindergarten program for 20 four-and three year olds in multi-age settings, i.e., 3- and 4-year olds, for pedagogical reasons at programs with a certificate of approval from MSDE in collaboration with a local board of education under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

**REQUIRED COMPONENTS:**

- A description and documentation in the enclosed application to show how the grantee will meet the ten (10) Quality Benchmarks for High-Quality Preschool Education as adopted by the *Task Force on Universal Preschool Education*.<sup>1</sup>
- Documentation of how families whose household income is at or below 300% of Federal Poverty Guidelines and whose children are enrolled in the publically funded prekindergarten session receive a tuition discount of twenty percent (20%) for a half-day (i.e., two and a half hour) session, or a forty percent 40% discount for a full-day (i.e., for a six and a half hour session)

<sup>1</sup> The quality benchmarks reflect the requirements of COMAR 13A.06.02.

- Description of the program's family engagement in accordance to the *Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework* ([http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/engage.html](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/engage.html))
- Verification that the program's participation in Maryland EXCELS and intent to publish at level five (5) within 12 months after the enrollment at Maryland EXCELS.
- Program must have a completed and signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local school system(LSS) which demonstrates ongoing collaboration in terms of the following:
  - Services for children with disabilities
  - Services for four-year-olds with limited English proficiency to align with LSS policies
  - Coordination of prekindergarten enrollment

***SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:***

1. Signed Cover Sheet
2. Project Update- FY 2015
3. Project management, Key Personnel
4. Collaborating Partners, i.e., MOU with the local school system (LSS) (Attachment B)
5. Quality Benchmarks and Programmatic Plan
6. Evaluation & Monitoring
7. Participation in Maryland EXCELS
8. Signed MSDE Budget Forms
9. Signed Assurances Page
10. Implementation Plan (Attachment A)

***ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS (Qualified Vendor):***

- Early childhood programs currently accredited by MSDE and/or an MSDE recognized accrediting organization, published at Level 5 on Maryland EXCELS, or a nonpublic school with a certificate of approval from MSDE; or
- Network of registered and nationally accredited family child care providers or programs with a certificate of approval by MSDE. Networks must be established by a nonprofit organization and in collaboration with a local board of education under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

***PROPOSAL REVIEW:***

The review of proposals will take place as follows:

1. Prequalification review of all applications to determine responsiveness to the RFP.
2. Review of qualified applications, i.e., those that are responsive to the RFP, by absolute priorities.
3. Applicants will be scored in accordance with objective review criteria.
4. MSDE may invite applicants for oral presentations.
5. Review committees submit recommendations for funding to the State Superintendent of Schools.

***AWARD NOTIFICATION:***

Notification of award will be provided on or about July 1, 2014.

***LENGTH OF GRANTS:***

July 1, 2014– June 30, 2015

**PERIOD OF OPERATION:**

August 2014- June 2015 (School Year 2014-2015)

**FUNDING PER SPACE:** \$5,600 (full-day) \$2,800 (half day)

**FUND USE:**

- Salaries, wages, and benefits for teaching staff. (Note: State certified teachers must be compensated commensurate to the entry salaries of the local school system in which the program is located.)
- Equipment, materials and supplies (e.g. classroom furniture, materials of instruction including MSDE approved curricular resources (curriculum) to support the Maryland State Curriculum, book supplies for family literacy activities.)
- Cost associated with maintaining MSDE or national accreditation status.
- Costs for contracts to administer the screening and intervention services for prekindergarten students.
- Costs associated with the provision of staff and professional development activities to support recertification of qualified teaching staff.
- Cost associated for the evaluation and monitoring of the project (may not exceed 5% of the total fund request) Note: MSDE will conduct an evaluation on all funded programs.
- Indirect costs (may not exceed 10% of the total fund request)

**Funds may not be used for:**

- Supplanting existing services
- Capital Improvement

**THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA), SECTION 427:**

Each application must develop and describe the steps the applicant will take to ensure equitable access to, and equitable participation in, the project or activity to be conducted with such assistance, by addressing the special needs of participants, and other program beneficiaries in order to overcome barriers to equitable participation.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**

Grantees must submit:

- Quarterly Progress Reports using MSDE supplied forms;
- Annual financial report at the end of the grant period; (September 30, 2015)
- Quarterly Enrollment and Attendance Reports using MSDE supplied forms;
- Grantees will host at least one site visit per funding cycle.

**LETTER OF INTEREST:**

Submit a letter of interest, i.e., e-mail, by May 13, 2014 to Ms. Jenaya Smith Parris at [jsmith@msde.state.md.us](mailto:jsmith@msde.state.md.us). The letter shall include the following: Name of program, location, number of children enrolled, date of program accreditation, publishing on Maryland EXCELS, or receipt of certificate of approval. The letter shall be signed and dated.

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE MEETING:**

Date and Time: May 14, 2014 from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm.

Location: Nancy S. Grasmick State Education Building, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, MD 21201, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, CR-6/7

Remote access: Toll-free dial-in: 1-866-247-6034. Conference Code: 5829743780

***SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS:***

Questions must be received by May 27, 2014 by 5:00 pm, and questions and responses will be distributed to all applicants via email.

***Please direct questions to:***

Ms. Jenaya Smith Parris  
Early Learning Program Development Specialist  
Division of Early Childhood Development 10<sup>th</sup> floor  
Maryland State Department of Education  
200 W. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
410-767-0602 (office) 410-333-6226 (fax) by email at: [jesmith@msde.state.md.us](mailto:jesmith@msde.state.md.us)

<b>COVER SHEET</b> <b>FY 2015</b> <b>Prekindergarten Expansion Grant</b> <b>Application (Absolute Priority I)</b>		
Name of Grantee:		Fed ID No:
Address:		
City:		ZIP:
Telephone:	FAX:	e-mail:
Contact Person:		
Address of contact person (if it is different from the address above):		
City:		ZIP:
Telephone:	FAX:	e-mail:
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Absolute Priority I <input type="checkbox"/> Invitational Priority I <input type="checkbox"/> Invitational Priority II		
Project Summary		
Prekindergarten Site Selection:		

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Organization\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**PROJECT UPDATE - FISCAL 2015**

Describe the specific goals and objectives of your Prekindergarten Expansion Grant<sup>2</sup>. Describe your plan for family engagement (in accordance with the Maryland Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework -

[http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child\\_care/docs/MdFamEngage\\_111213.pdf?id=238651&type=Movie](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/docs/MdFamEngage_111213.pdf?id=238651&type=Movie)) , meeting school readiness goals, providing services to eligible students with special needs and collaboration with the local school system to achieve your goals and objectives. Please use Appendix A to describe your projects goals and objectives.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT /KEY PERSONNEL**

List your project's key personnel responsible for the successful implementation and monitoring of the grant requirements and provide resume(s) for all key personnel in the appendix. <sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The Prekindergarten Expansion Grant may fund individual program or a network as defined by this RFP.

<sup>3</sup> Key personnel include the director/administrator, and lead teachers/providers who work directly with children in the classroom/early childhood setting.

**10 Quality Benchmarks and Programmatic Plan**

Indicate which of the following prekindergarten curriculum options is utilized in the prekindergarten program:

- State recommended comprehensive curriculum-(Name) \_\_\_\_\_
- A local school system curriculum that aligns with the Maryland College and Career-Ready Standards

Lead teachers in both public and private settings must have specialized training in early childhood education, and meet State certification standards for early childhood education. Please indicate the qualifications of the lead classroom teacher.

Assistant teachers must hold a minimum of a high school diploma, but preferably a CDA or equivalent training (i.e. Level 4 in MSDE Credentialing Program). Please indicate the qualifications of the classroom assistant.

Indicate how the lead teacher and classroom assistant will participate in yearly professional development activities.

Will the classroom teacher be employed part-time or full-time? \_\_\_\_\_

Ten month or twelve months? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the salary levels for the classroom (lead) teacher and classroom assistant?

Lead teacher salary \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant teacher salary \_\_\_\_\_

Will benefits be provided? If yes, describe benefits package:

Will the program provide a half-day (2 ½ hour) session or a full-day (6 ½ hour) session?

\_\_\_\_\_ Half-day, 2 ½ hour session \_\_\_\_\_ Full-day, 6 1/6 hour session

What is the rate of tuition that parents of children enrolled in the prekindergarten will be charged on a weekly basis? Include center tuition rate schedule as an appendix to the application. (Families whose children attend a 2 ½ hour session must receive a 20% discount on center tuition rates; those attending a 6 ½ hour program must receive a 40% discount on tuition rates.)

Class sizes must be limited to no more than 20 children for four-year-olds, with a staff to student ration of 10:1 for 4's and no more than 16 children per class for three-year-olds, with a staff to student ratio of 8:1. Please indicate the number of children that will be enrolled in the Preschool for All classrooms.

How will children be recruited for the program and how will the recruitment efforts be coordinated between the vendor and local school system?



How will you ensure that children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds are provided access to the program?

Programs must provide both screening and referral services covering at least vision, hearing speech and language, health and physical development. Programs must also offer, either directly or through coordination with local school systems or local departments of health and social services, additional support services for participants. (These services may include English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL), parenting support or training, physical and mental health and wellness services (SEFEL), and early intervention for children with disabilities and/or special health care needs.) Please indicate the how these services will be provided.

What is the nature of the collaboration between the qualified vendor and the local school system?

Note: The Quality Benchmarks adhere to COMAR 13A.06.02 (Prekindergarten)

### ***COLLABORATING PARTNERS***

List collaborating partners and describe their respective roles in the successful outcome of this project. Include in the appendix a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Local School System and, if applicable, other partners, signed and dated, describing the responsibilities of the collaborating partners.<sup>4</sup>

### ***EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF LEARNING***

Describe how the progress of prekindergarten students will be monitored throughout the year? How are parents informed about student progress and/or areas of concern including students with disabilities throughout the year?

What steps are taken to support children who exhibit concerns in domains of learning as they relate to school readiness?

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<sup>4</sup> A sample of an executed MOU is enclosed in ATTACHMENT B

What professional development opportunities do teachers participate in that allows for collaboration with the Local School Systems (LSS's)?

What type of data and instruments will be used to monitor the quality of the prekindergarten program? (e.g., CLASS and/or use of other quality indicators or rating systems)

***MARYLAND EXCELS PARTICIPATION AND PUBLISHING***

Date of enrollment \_\_\_\_\_

Date published or anticipated date of publishing \_\_\_\_\_

What tools and strategies have you put in place to maintain the quality standards for your current level in Maryland EXCELS?

**Budget Narrative (FY15) Complete for July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015**

Directions: Please provide a detailed description of the requested funds that will be spent by using the categories listed below. Transfer the subtotals of these categories onto line 214 (Community Services) of the enclosed MSDE Budget Form. Then list the total requested budget amount on the line *TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY OBJECT*. **Sign and date the MSDE C-125 Budget Form.**

Line Item	Requested Amount	In-Kind Contribution	Total
<b>1. - Salaries and Wages</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>			
<b>2. Contracted Services</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>			
<b>3. Supplies and Materials</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>			
<b>4. Other Charges (e.g., fringe costs)</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>			
<b>5. Equipment (e.g., classroom furniture)</b>			
<b>Subtotal</b>			
<b>Grand Total</b>			



GRANT NAME Prekindergarten Expansion Grant

GRANT RECIPIENT NAME

MSDE GRANT #

RECIPIENT  
GRANT #

REVENUE SOURCE

SCHOOL / CENTER NAME

FUND SOURCE  
CODE

GRANT PERIOD

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

CATEGORY/PROGRAM	BUDGET OBJECT						
	01- SALARIES & WAGES	02 - ANT	03- SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	04 - OTHER CHARGES	05 – EQUIPMENT	08 - TRANSFERS	BUDGET BY CAT /PROG
<b>201 Administration</b>							
Prog. 2 General Support							
Prog. 2 Business Support							
Prog. 2 Centralized Support							
<b>202 Mid-Level Administration</b>							
Prog. 1 Office of the Principal							
Prog. 1 Inst. Admin. & Supv.							
<b>203-205 Instruction Categories</b>							
Prog. 0 Regular Prog.							
Prog. 0 Special Prog.							
Prog. 0 Career & Tech Prog.							
Prog. 0 Gifted & Talented							
Prog. 0 School Library Media							
Prog. 0 Instruction Staff Dev.							
Prog. 1 Guidance Services							
Prog. 1 Psychological Services							
Prog. 1 Adult Education							
<b>206 Special Education</b>							
Prog. 04 Public Sch Instr.							
Prog. 09 Instruction Staff							
Prog. 15 Office of the							
Prog. 16 Inst. Admin &							
<b>207 Student Personnel Serv.</b>							
<b>208 Student Health Services</b>							
<b>209 Student Transportation</b>							
<b>210 Plant Operation</b>							
Prog. 30 Warehousing &							
Prog. 31 Operating Services							
<b>211 Plant Maintenance</b>							
<b>212 Fixed Charges</b>							
<b>214 Community Services</b>							
<b>215 Capital Outlay</b>							
Prog. 3 Land & Improvements							
Prog. 3 Buildings & Additions							
Prog. 3 Remodeling							
<b>Total Expenditures By Object</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Finance Official Approval

Name

Signature

Date

Telephone #

Supt./Agency Head Approval

Name

Signature

Date

Telephone #

MSDE Grant Manager Approval

**ASSURANCES**

By receiving funds under this grant award, I hereby agree, as grantee, to comply with the following terms and conditions:

1. Programs and projects funded in total or in part through this grant shall operate in compliance with State and federal statutes and regulations, including but not limited to the 1964 Civil Rights Act and amendments, COMAR 13A.06.02 Prekindergarten Programs, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 34 (Part C, IDEA), COMAR 13A.16.01-.19 Child Care Centers, COMAR 13A.14.06 Child Care Subsidy, COMAR 13A.14.09 Child Care Credential Program, Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) may, as it deems necessary, supervise, evaluate and provide guidance and direction to grantee in the conduct of activities performed under this grant. However, MSDE's failures to supervise, evaluate, or provide guidance and direction shall not relieve grantee of any liability for failure to comply with the terms of the grant award.
3. Grantee shall establish and maintain fiscal control and fund accounting procedures, as set forth in 34 CFR Parts 76 & 80 and in applicable statute and regulation.
4. Grantee shall adhere to MSDE reporting requirements, including the submission of all required reports. Failure to submit complete, accurate, and timely progress and final reports may result in the withholding of subsequent grant payments until such time as the reports are filed.
5. Entities receiving federal funds of \$500,000 or more must have an annual financial and compliance audit in accordance with OMB Circular A-133.
6. Grantee shall retain all records of its financial transactions and accounts relating to this grant for a period of three years, or longer if required by federal regulation, after termination of the grant agreement. Such records shall be made available for inspection and audit by authorized representatives of MSDE.
7. Grantee must receive prior written approval from the MSDE Program Monitor before implementing any programmatic changes with respect to the purposes for which the grant was awarded.
8. Grantee must receive prior written approval from the MSDE Program Monitor for any Budgetary realignment of \$1,000 or 15% of total object, program or category of expenditure, *whichever is greater*. Grantee must support the request with the reason for the requested change. Budget realignments must be submitted at least 45 days prior to the end of the grant period.
9. Requests for grant extensions, when allowed, must be submitted at least 45 days prior to the end of the grant period.
10. Grantee shall repay any funds that have been finally determined through the federal or State audit resolution process to have been misspent, misapplied, or otherwise not properly accounted for, and further agrees to pay any collection fees that may subsequently be imposed by the federal and/or State government.
11. If the grantee fails to fulfill its obligations under the grant agreement properly and on time, or otherwise violates any provision of the grant, including failure to maintain proper documentation and records as required by pertinent federal and State statute and regulations, MSDE may suspend or terminate the grant by written notice to the grantee. The notice shall specify those acts or omissions relied upon as cause for suspension or termination. Grantee shall repay MSDE any funds that have been determined through audit to have been misspent, unspent, misapplied, or otherwise not properly accounted for. The repayment may be made by an offset to funds that are otherwise due the grantee.

**I further certify that all of the facts, figures and representations made with respect to the grant application and grant award, including exhibits and attachments, are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.**

<b>Superintendent of Schools or Head of Grantee Agency</b>	<b>Date</b>

**Appendix A****Instructions:** See next page for information on Goals, Strategies, and Activities.**Implementation Plan** (reproduce this form as needed)

<b>GOAL(s):</b>					
<b>STRATEGIES:</b>					
<b>Activities</b>	<b>Dates</b>		<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Funding</b>	
	<b>Date Initiated</b>	<b>Expected Completion Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Outcome</b>	<b>Funding Required</b>	<b>In-Kind</b>

## Goals, Strategies, and Activities

### ***Goals***

State the overall goal of your project at the top of the Implementation Plan. The goal should address the main problem (e.g., to increase the number of children being ready for school). While you must have at least one goal, it is possible to have multiple goals; however, the more goals you establish the more complex your project becomes. Goals must have deadlines of one year.

### ***Strategies***

Strategies are broad approaches (methods, procedures, techniques) employed to accomplish your outcomes. When determining your strategies, you should consider the clients you are targeting and how will they use or be affected by the services you provide. Programs must also include strategies about family engagement, partnerships with local school systems, and support services such as screening and referral of students with special needs.

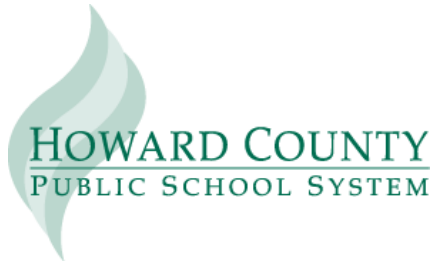
### ***Activities***

Activities are the specific steps you will take to accomplish the project goal, and involve direct service to clients (children, parents, and teachers). Examples include specific teacher trainings, family nights, and mentoring sessions. They may take place on a single date (e.g., 1-day training session) or over a period of time (e.g., ongoing technical assistance) List the activities that your project will implement. Then relate each activity to a strategy.

Note: Networks state the goals, strategies, and activities from the viewpoint of the non-profit organization overseeing the network of programs.



## Appendix B SAMPLE MOU



### HOWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP DECLARATION

between

*The Young School at King's Contrivance*

and

*The Howard County Public School System*

#### Vision

The vision of the partnership between the *The Young School at King's Contrivance* and the *Howard County Public School System* is to model a public-private partnership between a local school system and community-based provider for implementing a *Preschool for All* program resulting in positive outcomes for children.

#### Mission

Per funding provided by the Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Education Enhancement Grant for Preschool Services, *The Young School* and the *Howard County Public School System* will work together to expand access to a low-cost, high quality preschool education that meets 10 quality benchmarks set by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) - Attachment A.

#### Objectives

*The Young School* and the *Howard County Public School System* will

- Target families to participate in the prekindergarten program with a focus on children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who do not meet the income eligibility requirements of the public school program; and English language learners.

- Share Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) and Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) screening data.
- Work with the Howard County Health Department to provide vision and hearing screening for all 4-year olds enrolled in the prekindergarten program.
- Collaborate to ensure a smooth transition to kindergarten.
- Monitor and track the progress of the grant via a variety of evaluation tools, including but not limited to MSDE standards, questionnaires, self-appraisals, etc.
- Serve on the Howard County Transition to Kindergarten Committee to establish open communications between the child care community and the public school system, and to establish standardized methods of data collection between the prekindergarten program and public school kindergarten.
- Meet at least yearly to evaluate the partnership against measurable evaluation criteria and revise the agreement as warranted.
- Follow all Howard County Board of Education policies and procedures.

The Young School will

- Provide a high quality prekindergarten education and wrap-around care to eligible children.
- Provide a tuition discount for up to 20 children meeting the income and/or language eligibility guidelines.
- Refer income and/or language eligible families who are currently enrolled at The Young School to the scholarship program; offer financial assistance when qualified.
- Provide parent workshops to support school readiness skills.
- Hire qualified early childhood education teachers.
- Assess the students in the fall and spring using the 29 school readiness indicators used by the HCPSS; plan developmentally appropriate lessons based on each child's needs.

The Howard County Public School System will

- Promote the pilot prekindergarten program offered at The Young School and refer families who do not qualify for the HCPSS prekindergarten program and/or those who do qualify but would benefit from services (e.g., wrap-around care) offered at The Young School).
- Educate school administrators and applicable school system offices about eligibility requirements and the process for referring families who qualify for The Young School prekindergarten program.
- Offer professional development opportunities to Young School grant teachers; provide training and technical support to teachers on selected developmental screening tools.
- Recognize the partnership with The Young School in school newsletters, on the school website and at various events and venues throughout the school year.
- Issue a press release to announce the formation and signing of a partnership between The Young School and HCPSS.
- Invite representatives from The Young School to the Howard County Public School System Annual Partnership Celebration.
- Recognize the partnership between The Young School and HCPSS in the *Howard County Public School System Educational Partnerships Annual Report*.

HCPSS welcomes the opportunity to partner with many types of businesses and organizations. A partnership, however, does not constitute promotion or endorsement by HCPSS for any partner's causes, ideas, web sites, products or services.

We, the following, do fully agree to the above stated partnership agreement between the The Young School and the Howard County Public School System on this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of January in the year 2011. The agreement shall remain in effect until such time that either party provides 10 days notice of its intent to terminate the partnership.

\_\_\_\_\_

Superintendent of Schools, HCPS

\_\_\_\_\_, Owner

The Young School

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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TASK FORCE ON UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL EDUCATION  
10 QUALITY BENCHMARKS

**1. Curriculum standards.**

Universal preschool programs must implement a state-recommended comprehensive curriculum, an MSDE-approved individually developed curriculum, or a local school system curriculum that aligns with the MMSR, State Curriculum (SC), and *Guidelines for Healthy Child Development and Care of Young Children*.

**2. Teacher certification requirement.**

Lead teachers in both public and private settings must meet state teacher certification standards for Early Childhood Education (Pre-K–3).

**3. Teacher specialized training requirement.**

Pre-service requirements for lead teachers must include specialized training in Early Childhood Education. Elementary teaching certificates alone will not qualify.

**4. Assistant teacher degree requirement.**

Assistant teachers must hold a minimum of a high school diploma, but preferably a Child Development Associate (CDA) or equivalent training (i.e., Level 4 in Child Care Credentialing Program).

**5. Teacher recertification requirement.**

Teachers must attend a specified number of hours of approved professional development per year.

**6. Maximum class size.**

Class sizes must be limited to no more than 20 children for four-year-olds and no more than 16 children for three-year-olds.

**7. Staff-child ratio.**

At least one staff member must be present per 10 children in a classroom for four-year-olds and per 8 children for three-year-olds.

**8. Screening/referral requirements.**

Programs must provide both screening and referral services covering at least vision, hearing, speech and language, health and physical development. Programs also must offer, either directly or through coordination with local school systems, or local health and social service departments, additional support services for participants, which may include English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) services, parenting support or training, physical and mental health and wellness services, and early intervention for children with disabilities and/or special health care needs, including medical interventions within inclusive settings.

**9. Meal requirements.**

All participants must be offered at least one full meal per day if preschool services are offered for more than 2 ½ hours, in accordance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

**10. Monitoring.**

Each year programs receiving grant funding from MSDE must conduct a self-evaluation to assess program quality according to these quality indicators and report performance data to MSDE. MSDE will conduct two site visits each year. Programs not meeting standards and in need of improvement must create a program improvement plan identifying the steps they will take to fulfill each standard. Additional site visits will be conducted to assess improvement and adherence to quality standards.